

JURISDICTION:

CONNECTICUT

General References:

This chapter summarizes Connecticut State statutes related to speed.  
Connecticut General Statutes Annotated and Regulations of Connecticut  
State Agencies (RCSA)

Basis for a Speed Law Violation:

Basic Speed Rule:

Traveling Unreasonably Fast. No person shall drive a motor vehicle at a rate of speed greater than is reasonable, having regard to the width, traffic and use of highway, road or parking area, the intersection of streets and weather conditions. §§14-218a(a) & 14-281a(a)

Statutory Speed Limit:

65 MPH on multiple lane, limited access highways which are suitable for such a speed limit §§14-218a(b) & 14-219(a)  
55 MPH upon other highways §14-219(a)

See Other below.

50 MPH for a school bus on a divided limited access highway §14-281a(a)  
40 MPH for a school bus on all other highways §14-281a(a)

Posted (Maximum) Speed Limit:

The State Traffic Commission may determine speed limits<sup>1</sup> on any highway, bridge, or parkway. §14-218a(a)

Minimum Speed Limit:

I. No person shall operate a motor vehicle at such a slow speed as to impede or block the normal and reasonable movement of traffic. §14-220(a)  
II. A person, driving at less than the normal speed of traffic, shall drive in the right-hand lane available for traffic or as close as practicable to the right-hand curb or edge of the highway. §14-230(b)

Posted (Minimum) Speed Limit:

40 MPH<sup>2</sup> on a limited access divided highway §14-220(a)

Other:

I. Driving such a rate of speed as to endanger the life of a vehicle occupant. §14-219(a)  
II. A person must obtain a special permit to operate a vehicle on a highway with a normal speed ≤15 MPH while transporting 3 or more persons for pleasure purposes (whether or not for hire). §14-221

Adjudication of Speed Law Violations:

Civil/Criminal Adjudication of Violation:

All Speed Law Violations are Infractions. §§14-218a(c), 14-219(b), 14-220(c), 14-221, 14-230(d) & 14-281a(c)

Other:

Sanctions Following an Adjudication of a Speed Law Violation:

Criminal Sanctions:

Imprisonment:

Term (Day, Month, Years,

Etc.):

None

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<sup>1</sup>"[D]iffering limits may be established for different types of vehicles...." In addition, any speed in excess of this limit is *prima facie* evidence that such speed was not reasonable. §14-218a(a) Note: Local governments may establish speed limits on the streets under their jurisdiction. However, such speed limits must be approved by the State Traffic Commission. §14-218a(a)

<sup>2</sup>This minimum speed does not apply either (1) to highway maintenance vehicles or (2) to certain types commercial vehicles on grades. §14-220(a)

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Mandatory Minimum Term:

Fine:

Amount (\$ Range):

I. Except for speed law offenses committed under §14-219, a fine of not more than **\$50** §14-296

II. For speed law offenses committed under §14-219, a fine of **\$35 to \$90**<sup>3</sup> §51-164m(c)

III. **\$35 to \$90**<sup>3</sup> or **\$100 to \$150**<sup>3</sup> if the offender was operating a truck.<sup>4</sup> For speeds (1) >65 MPH but ≤70 MPH on multiple line limited access highways with a speed limit of 65 MPH, (2) >55 MPH but ≤70 MPH on other multiple line limited access highways and (2) on any other highway >55 MPH but ≤60 MPH §§14-219(b) and 51-164m(c) & (d)

IV. **\$100 to \$150**<sup>3</sup> or **\$150 to \$200**<sup>3</sup> if the offender was operating a truck.<sup>4</sup> For speeds (1) >70 MPH but ≤85 MPH on multiple line limited access highways and (2) on any other highway >60 MPH but ≤85 MPH §§14-219(c) & 51-164m(d)

Mandatory Min. Fine (\$):

**None**

Other Penalties:

Traffic School:

**Driver Retraining Program.** I. A person, who commits 2 or more moving violations, may be required to complete a driver retraining program. §14-111g

II. A person ≥18 years old, who commits 2 or more moving violations within 1 year of obtaining a driver's license, may be required to complete a driver retraining program. §14-296d

Other:

**Double Fines.** If the speeding offenses occurred in a designated construction zone, the fine sanction is double the usual amount. §1 of Public Act 95-181

Licensing Action:

Type of Licensing Action

(Susp/Rev):

I. **Suspension or Revocation**-For offenses committed under §14-219 §14-111b

II. **Suspension** under either the Point System or for Unsafe Vehicle Operation for other speeding violations<sup>5</sup> §14-111 and RCSA §§14-137-

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<sup>3</sup>For offenses committed under §14-219, the fine sanctions to be imposed are established by the superior court via a fine schedule. This schedule consists of a sliding fine scale which must be based upon the severity of the violation. §51-164m

<sup>4</sup>A truck is defined as "every motor vehicle designed, used or maintained primarily for the transportation of property." §14-260n(4)

<sup>5</sup>**Point System.** I. If a person accumulates 10 points within a 24 month period, their license is suspended for 30 days. After such suspension if, a person again commits an offense (within 5 years from the beginning of the 30 day suspension period) which raises the point

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accumulation above 10, their license is suspended until the point total is  $\leq 10$ . Points remain on the driver's record for 24 months from the date of assessment. II. The following points are assessed for speeding violations: One (1) point either for operating at an unreasonable speed under §14-218a, for violating §14-219 or for failing to drive in right-hand lane; two (2) points for driving at such a slow speed as to impede traffic under §14-220; three (3) points for racing on the highways under §14-224(c); and, five (5) points for operating a school bus at an excessive speed under §14-281a. RCSA §§14-137a-5, 14-137a-6 & 14-137-8 **History of Unsafe Operation.** If a person has had 4 unsafe moving traffic convictions within 2 years, their license is subject to a 30 day suspension. Such convictions include most speeding offenses and other rules of the road violations. §14-111(a) & RCSA §14-137-82

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### Sanctions Following an Adjudication of a Speeding Violation: (continued)

#### Licensing Action:

##### Type of Licensing Action

(Susp/Rev): (continued)

##### Term of License Withdrawal

(Days, Months, Years, etc.):

82, 14-137a-5 & 14-137a-8

I. For offenses committed under §14-219: 1st, 2nd or 3rd offense-Not more than **30 days** (but only if the court recommends suspension or revocation) §14-111b(a) 4th offense (within 2 years)-Not more than **30 days** 5th offense (within 2 years)-Not more than **60 days** Subsequent offense (within 2 years)-**6 months** §14-111b(b) & (c)

II. For Other Speeding Violations: **30 days** if the requisite number of points have been accumulated.<sup>5</sup>

##### Mandatory Minimum Term of

Withdrawal:

The above licensing actions may be mandatory.

#### Miscellaneous Sanctions

Not Included Elsewhere:

### Other Criminal Actions Related to Speeding:

#### Racing on Highway<sup>6</sup>:

##### Sanctions:

##### Criminal Sanction:

##### Imprisonment (Term):

Misdemeanor §§14-224(c) & (g) and 53a-26(a)

1st offense or subsequent offense (within 10 years)-Not more than **1 year** §§14-1(a)(69) & 14-224(g)

**None**

##### Mandatory Minimum Term:

##### Fine (\$ Range):

1st offense-**\$75 to \$600** Subsequent offense (within 10 years)-**\$100 to \$1,000** §§14-1(a)(69) & 14-224(g)

**None**

##### Mandatory Minimum Fine:

#### Administrative Licensing Action:

##### Licensing Authorized and

Type of Action:

**Suspension** under either the Point System or for Unsafe Vehicle Operation<sup>5</sup> §14-111 and RCSA §§14-137-82, 14-137a-5 & 14-137a-8

##### Length of Term of

Licensing Withdrawal:

**30 days** if the requisite number of points have been accumulated.<sup>5</sup>

##### Mandatory Action--Minimum

Length of License

Withdrawal:

The above licensing actions may be mandatory.

Other:

### Other Criminal Actions Related to Speeding: (continued)

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<sup>6</sup>Under §14-224(c), "[n]o person shall operate a motor vehicle upon any public highway for a wager or for any race or for the purpose of making a speed contest."

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<u>Reckless Driving:</u>	Misdemeanor §§14-222 & 53a-26(a)
Sanction:	
Criminal:	
Imprisonment (Term):	Not more than <b>30 days</b> §14-222(b)
Mandatory Minimum Term of Imprisonment:	<b>None</b>
Fine (\$ Range):	<b>\$100 to \$300</b> §14-222(b)
Mandatory Minimum Fine:	<b>None</b>
Administrative Licensing Actions:	
Type of Licensing Action (Susp/Rev):	<b>Suspension</b> §14-111(b)
Length of Term of License Withdrawal Action:	<u>1st offense-30 to 90 days</u> <u>Subsequent offense</u> -Not less than <b>90 days</b> §14-111(b)
Mandatory Term of License Withdrawal Action:	<u>1st offense-30 days</u> <u>Subsequent offense-90 days</u> §14-111(b) Note: Given the wording in §14-111(b), these suspensions appear to be mandatory.
Other:	

### Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) Operators:

<u>Grounds for Disqualification:</u>	A person is disqualified from operating a CMV if while driving such a vehicle they either (1) commit 2 "serious traffic violations" within a 3 year period or (2) commit 3 such violations within a 3 year period. §14-44k(g)
<u>Period of Disqualification:</u>	<u>2 serious violations</u> (within 3 years)-Not less than <b>60 days</b> <u>3 serious violations</u> (within 3 years)-Not less than <b>120 days</b> §14-44k(g)
<u>Period of Mandatory Disqualification:</u>	<u>2 serious violations</u> (within 3 years)- <b>60 days</b> <u>3 serious violations</u> (within 3 years)- <b>120 days</b> §14-44k(g)

<sup>7</sup>Reckless driving is defined as operating a motor vehicle either (1) recklessly, having regard to the width, traffic and use of such highway, road, school property or parking area, the intersection of streets and the weather conditions, (2) at a rate of speed as to endanger the life of any person (other the vehicle operator), or (3) at a rate of speed >85 MPH. §14-222(a)

<sup>8</sup>A person who has obtained a commercial driver's license (CDL) and is qualified to operate a commercial motor vehicle. A commercial motor vehicle is defined as a vehicle designed to carry either passengers or property and either has a gross vehicle weight of ≥26,001 lbs., is designed to transport 16 or more persons, is designed to transport 10 or more persons and is used to carry students under the age of 21, or is transporting hazardous materials which requires that the vehicle to be placarded in accordance with U.S. Department of Transportation regulations. §14-1(a)(11)

<sup>9</sup>A "serious traffic violation" includes exceeding the speed limit by 15 or more MPH or reckless driving. §14-1(a)(71)